

**DISPLAY INFORMATION SELECTION  
APPARATUS AND METHOD, PROGRAM AND  
RECORDING MEDIUM**

**CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED  
APPLICATION**

[0001] The present disclosure relates to subject matter contained in Japanese Patent Application No. 2005-315005, filed on Oct. 28, 2005, the disclosure of which is expressly incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**[0002] 1. Field of the Invention**

[0003] The present invention relates to a technology for selectively displaying a plurality of items of information on a display device, which items of information relate with one another via different respective ones of one or more relation criteria.

**[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art**

[0005] In recent years, along with a spread of information terminals such as, for example, personal computers (hereafter referred to as "PCs"), portable terminals such as portable telephones and PDAs (Personal Data Assistants), and digital household electrical appliances such as car navigation systems and television program recorders, opportunities are increasing for a user to select various types of information that may be displayed on a display device of an information terminal in order to carry out a desired process. To date, only information held in a specified system has normally been provided. However, in recent years, because of progress in network technology, and a spread of network technology such as, for example, the Internet, it has become possible to provide information not only in a local area, but also from a server located in a remote place.

[0006] Also, along with development of a communication environment such as, for example, a broadband network, it has become possible to use not only small volumes of static image data, but also large volumes of moving image data or music data. For this reason, as a huge amount of information now exists on the network, it has become difficult for a user to select desired information. Accordingly, search functions such as, for example, a keyword search or a directory search have been used as an information retrieval and/or selection method.

[0007] However, these search functions require a user to specify in advance keyword information for a target of search. For this reason, these search functions may not provide a sufficient display of search results to a user who has a vague browsing objective and needs information that match a passing whim. Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication No. 2004-259040 provides an information display method that enables a user to visually evaluate and select information displayed on a display device (Paragraph 0009).

[0008] However, the method for displaying information in response to a user's intention described in JP-A-2004-259040 merely provides an n-dimensional space (contents space) in accordance with an information keyword (thumbnail information) for each item of information (contents), and arranging the keyword (thumbnail information) in the space. In short, it does not enable a user to visually select desired information.

[0009] Also, information that the user desires may not always be specified by keywords. The user, when acquiring specified information, may also wish to acquire new information that relates to the specified information. For example, a typical user may have had the experience of noticing a certain item while shopping, and therefrom looking for an item that closer matches the user's image of a desired item. Net-surfing involves browsing for information in much the same way as the shopping behavior pattern just described. However, net-surfing has not been a means for a user to visually search for desired information. The same can be said not only for information on a network, but also for information in a database provided in a single information processing device.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[0010] The present invention is made in view of at least these problems. It is an object of the present invention to provide an apparatus, a method, a program and a recording medium for selecting display information, which enable a user to visually select desired information, without difficulty, from among a plurality of items of information, which relate to one another in a complicated manner, and to display the selected item on a display.

[0011] In order to achieve the object, according to a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a display information selection apparatus for selectively displaying a plurality of items of information on a display in accordance with an input from an input device, including at least a first input and a second input. The items of information relate to one another via at least one relation criteria for different respective ones of the relation criteria. The apparatus includes a specified information displayer that displays specified information in a specified position on the display. The specified information is optionally selected from among the plurality of items of information. The apparatus further includes a selectable information displayer that displays selectable other items of information, relating to the specified information via a selected relation criterion selected from among the relation criteria that relate the other items of information to the specified information. The selectable other items of information are aligned on a selection axis set on the display with the specified position as a reference. The apparatus further includes a non-selectable information displayer that displays other non-selected items of information relating to the specified information via another relation criterion, other than the selected relation criterion. The non-selected items of information are aligned on a non-selection axis set on the display beside the selection axis with the specified position as a reference. The apparatus further includes a specified information changing system that changes a selection of the specified information to another item of information displayed adjacent to the specified information on the selection axis in accordance with an input from the first input. The apparatus further includes a selected criterion changing system that changes a selection of the selected relation criterion to another relation criterion of the relation criteria that relate the specified information to the other items of information in accordance with an input from the second input.

[0012] The selection axis and the non-selection axis are not necessarily recognized as such by the display information selection apparatus, but they are necessarily recognized